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Note verbale dated 6 April 2004 from the Permanent Mission of Andorra to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Principality of Andorra to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to include herewith a letter of Juli Minoves-Triquell, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Andorra, in his capacity as Chair of the Forum for Security and Cooperation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Andorra to the United Nations would be very grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

* A/59/50 and Corr.1.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 6 April 2004 from the Permanent Mission of Andorra to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to write to you in my capacity as current Chair of the Forum for Security and Cooperation (FSC) of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In accordance with the desire of the Forum, I respectfully request that the text of the present letter be circulated among member states of the United Nations, as well as UN officials and institutions, as an official document of the United Nations (General Assembly and Security Council), with the aim to increase interaction between different global organizations and to foster increased cooperation. As chair, Andorra shares the wish of the FSC to make its valuable work and goals better known. The FSC, a decision making body within the OSCE, deals with politico-military issues and meets weekly in Vienna.

The Forum is devoted to its traditional mandate of arms control, disarmament and achieving and fostering Confidence and Security Building Measures. The improvement of existing security building measures, their timely adaptation and, the development and implementation of new arms control agreements are key contributions to our political and military stability. A number of key documents guide the Forum. The Vienna Document of 1999 includes evaluation visits, inspections, observation, military contracts, risk reduction mechanisms, information exchanges and regional measures. The Code of Conduct on Politico-military aspects of security deals with the democratic control of military and security forces, international humanitarian law and principles governing the use of force, including in civil conflicts. Finally, the Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons sets out concrete norms, principles and measures to reduce the destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of these weapons.

Annual information exchanges under agreed CSBMs by the Participating States and the attention given to their implementation during the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting serve as a valuable means of preventing conflict and managing crisis. In this yearly meeting experts review the CSBMs implementation and discuss the current and future implementation of the Document.

The Forum has also agreed on a number of other documents that establish common norms and principles related to conventional arms transfers, non-proliferation and localized crisis situations, as well as questionnaires on Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention and Chemical Weapons Convention.

In 2003 the work of the FSC focused on many issues arising from threats to security and stability in the twenty-first century. In accordance with its competencies and mandate, the FSC contributed to the OSCE Document on Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the twenty-first century, adopted at the Maastricht Ministerial meeting. The FSC contribution has proved the continuing relevance of our politico-military *acquis*, including possible adaptations and exploring new ways to adapt the documents to new threats and challenges.

Many activities were carried out during 2003 to ensure and foster the implementation of all confidence and security building measures. New threats require new responses and the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the twenty-first century, presented in Maastricht, both reflects these concerns and attempts to find answers.

We are committed to prevent and combat terrorism, manifested in the FSC Roadmap for Implementation of the Bucharest Plan of Action adopted on 20 March 2002. The OSCE defends an integral vision of the struggle against

terrorism, both by controlling the arsenals and access to arms, and attacking intolerance and human rights violations that in many cases cultivate terrorism. This vision works not only to avoid the disastrous effects of terrorism but also attacks its structural causes.

FSC Decision 7/03, taken in July 2003, and endorsed at the Maastricht Ministerial, reflects the growing concern expressed by the OSCE participating States of the potential catastrophic threat posed by MANPADS. This Decision highlights the importance of effective and comprehensive export controls on MANPADS and calls upon participating States to use existing mechanisms under the OSCE SALW Document to destroy excess MANPADS. The importance of effective and comprehensive export controls for MANPADS must be seen as part of the FSC efforts to combat terrorism. A way to avoid the acquisition of these arms by non-state actors, such as terrorists and criminal groups, is currently under review by the FSC. In addition, the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century insists that the OSCE should use all its tools to address proliferation of MANPADS. The Strategy document also encourages states to ensure the security and integrity of national stockpiles to guard against theft or illicit transfer.

The FSC has also tackled the question concerning the OSCE's contribution to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and thereby reduce the risk of terrorists gaining access to its components.

In this sense, it is essential to mention the effort of the OSCE/ FSC to co-operate with other international organizations, which share responsibilities on this matter. For instance, I would like to point out the presence of Ambassador Sune Danielsson, Head of the Wassenaar Secretariat, as a speaker to our Forum, on the 28th of January this year, and the discussions that followed, which we hope

will lead to the adoption of a new document to control the exports of MANPADS. This document was approved last December in the framework of the Wassenaar Arrangement.

The FSC agreed to expand the scope of information to be exchanged on national measures aimed at preventing and combating terrorism, and provided in States' responses to the Code of Conduct Questionnaire. According to Decision 16/02, taken in November 2002, the Code of Conduct Questionnaire was updated through the expansion of Question 1, which includes commitments toward preventing and combating terrorism, including the ratification and implementation of international agreements in this sphere. The participating States provided additional information on national efforts taken to combat terrorism in April 2003, responding to the 2002 expansion of the questionnaire.

Small arms and light weapons are also the weapons of choice for insurgents, criminals and terrorists. The FSC continues its efforts aimed at preventing a diversion of legally manufactured SALW into the criminal sphere.

In November 2000 the FSC adopted the Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). This Document is the leading tool in the OSCE's response to the excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms, which have been of great concern to the international community, pose a threat to peace and security, and closely relate to high levels of violence and crime. This document also addresses MANPADS, as one part of the category of the light weapons. For the FSC, MANPADS can be addressed as part of the overall small arms framework.

The OSCE Handbook on Best Practice Guides, presented at the Maastricht Ministerial, complements the Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons and facilitates the ongoing and full implementation of the OSCE SALW Document. It

offers guidelines for national procedures for manufacture, marking and export and import control, through stockpile security and destruction techniques and small arms measures as part of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. This year one of the goals of the OSCE is to help to introduce the content of the Handbook in the OSCE region as widely as possible. Indeed the handbook has had an impact on work being done elsewhere. General information about the Handbook of Best Practice Guides was presented at the UN Biennial Meeting on SALW in July. In addition, a UN First Committee consensus resolution (from its 2003 session) recognized the work of the FSC in combating illicit trade of SALW in all its aspects and was adopted by the General Assembly.

Currently, the FSC is addressing a proposal related to End-User Certificates. This proposal offers an opportunity for the OSCE to lead in the efforts to ensure tighter controls of small arms exports. Reaching agreement on the elements implicit in this decision would build on the standards provided for OSCE States in the Small Arms and Light Weapons Document and Best Practice Guides on SALW and reaffirm the OSCE's commitment and leadership in this area.

Last summer, Belarus made a request for assistance in the destruction of surplus stockpiles of small arms, thereby launching the practical implementation of the PC-FSC Decision on Section V of the SALW Document. Following a related seminar hosted by Belarus last October and attended by representatives of the FSC Chair and CiO, an assessment visit, as an element of the relevant mechanism, is planned to be held for the first time in Belarus.

In December 2003, the Maastricht Ministerial endorsed the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition, which had been completed the month before by the FSC. This document enlarges the FSC acquis and tackles stock surpluses that can cause a risk to security, including environmental problems. It also establishes a mechanism for voluntary co-operation between States that ask

for assistance and those that are prepared to provide it. This mechanism is brought under the Forum's mandate. To continue making progress in addressing the dangerous stockpiling of conventional ammunition we must take the appropriate steps to ensure an expeditious implementation of the OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition now that it has been endorsed by the highest levels of the Organization. Appropriate steps should be taken to consider the request for assistance made by Ukraine in December 2003 and Belarus in March 2004.

In December, the OSCE decided to seek ways to share information about its principles, norms and standards and to involve the Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation in the activities of the Organization. The FSC has already moved forward on this by inviting the Partners to some of its meetings in order to increase interaction with them and to identify areas of common interest and concern and possibilities for concrete initiatives.

As you can see, the FSC takes its responsibility to contribute to the common security of the OSCE states quite seriously. But the work of the FSC is not necessarily limited to the OSCE region. As can be seen with the SALW Document, for example, we feel that the OSCE makes a contribution to global security. I hope this information about recent work in the FSC provides a basis for increased cooperation and interaction between organizations, particularly with the United Nations.

(*Signed*) Juli **Minoves-Triquell**
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Chair of the Forum for Security and Cooperation of the
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe